

Constantin Botez, one of the Founding Triumvirs of the Surgery School in Iasi

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Abstract. Professor Constantin Botez (1854-1909) was one of the three founding fathers of the surgery school in Iasi, along with Professors Ludovic Russ senior and Leon Sculy. Born in Iasi, Botez (Bottez) studied Medicine in Paris, where he was also trained in the medical externship and internship programmes. In 1877-1878, he interrupted his studies and enlisted in the sanitary corps, participating in the Romanian War of Independence. Botez graduated magna cum laude in 1882, with a doctoral thesis synthesising his "Contribution to the clinical study of tumors in the temporal region" [Contribution à l'étude clinique des tumeurs de la région temporale] (Paris: A. Parent, 1882, 136 p.), winning the Bronze Medal. The thesis included the first anatomo-pathological description of a craniofacial malformation, which much later, in 1969, Gorlin and Sedano named "fronto-metaphyseal dysplasia". In Paris Constantin Botez had outstanding masters, such as Professors U. Trélat, A. A. S. Verneuil, L.A. Gosselin and M.-E. Desprez. Back home, in 1883 Dr. Botez was initially a district physician, and in 1885 he was appointed professor of surgery clinic at the "Saint Spyridon" Hospital in Iasi. His activity illustrated the transition from the pre-antiseptic to the antiseptic era in medicine. He was among the trailblazers of antiseptic methods applied to surgery. Therefore, even though extremely prudent, he started to perform major and elaborate surgical operations, previously prohibited or greatly limited by the devastating infections that usually caused the death of patients even in the case of interventions impeccably performed technically. Together with Professor Sculy, he pioneered neuro-surgery and pediatric surgery in Iasi. A good manager, he was administrator ('epitrop') of the "St. Spyridon" Hospitals Administration (1904-1907). A skilled practitioner, a good teacher and a motivated researcher, he published many case reports in various publications, mainly edited in Iasi, and particularly in the Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists in Iasi, that appears since 1887. He was a member of this remarkable scientific Society established in 1830. Botez was appointed in the editorial board of the first issue of its periodical, curator of the Society's Museum of Natural History, he was elected vice-president and eventually its president (1901-1903). Constantin Botez died unexpectedly, probably from a heart attack, in July 1909.

Keywords: Constantin Botez, surgery, Faculty of Medicine, "St. Spyridon" Hospitals Administration, Iasi



Fig.1.C. Botez

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Biographical and professional landmarks. Constantin Botez [Bottez] (1854-1909) was born in Iasi, on October 4, 1854, and died suddenly in the same city, at only 55, in July 1909, when his heart failed (Fig.1). He was survived by his mother and sisters, whom he adored (1). He attended the famous National High School in his hometown. Then, from 1874 to 1882, he studied medicine at the Faculty of Medicine in Paris, being from 1876 an external and then a temporary internal student in the Clinic of Professor Ulysse Trélat (1828-1890) (2). He also learned in the surgery service of the renowned Professor Aristide Auguste Stanislas Verneuil (1823-189). He was trained both at the *Hôpital de la Charité*, alongside the eminent Professor Léon Athanase Gosselin (1815-1887) and Professor Marius-Eugène Desprez, a surgeon concerned with antisepsis, a topic frequently discussed at the time, related to the problem of infectious diseases, but equally of infections in surgical services, which nullified all the work and skill of surgeons.

Animated by a strong patriotic feeling, during the Romanian War of Independence (1877-1878) Botez left school, enlisting in the sanitary corps (1).

During his Parisian internship, the young Costica Botez - as he was also called - received the Bronze Medal of Public Assistance. In 1882, he obtained the title of Doctor of Medicine and Surgery *maxima cum laude*, with the thesis entitled "Contribution à l'étude clinique des tumeurs de la région temporale" [*Contribution to the clinical study of tumors in the temporal region*] (Paris: A. Parent, 1882, 136 p.) (1). It was a synthesis of all the cases published in the literature up to that date, including 52 observations, four of which were personal. In these pages, Botez made the first anatomico-pathological description of a cranio-facial malformation named only much later, in 1968-1969, by Gorlin and Sedano, "fronto-metaphyseal dysplasia". Doctor Botez's thesis, awarded by the Faculty of Medicine in Paris, was led by Professor Trélat, who, together with Baizeau, developed the Baizeau-Trélat method of

correcting the defect known as palato-schisis (split of the palatine veil) (3,4).

Dr. Botez's activity in Iasi. Upon returning to the country in 1883, he also printed his doctoral thesis in Romanian: „[Studiu clinic asupra tumorilor regiunii temporale], by Dr. C. Bottez, Former Temporary Intern of the Hospitals of Paris, Bronze Medal of Public Assistance, Laureate of the Faculty of Medicine in Paris, Secondary Physician of the "St. Trinity" Hospital in Iassy, Iasi: Associated Romanian Workers Printing Office, 1885". So he returned to Iași after defending his thesis. Between 1883-1886 he was appointed, through a brilliant competition, one of the city's district doctors and secondary (i.e., specialist) doctor at the "St. Trinity Hospital" (Pașcanu Hospital), belonging to the "St. Spyridon" Hospitals Administration" [Epitropia], where he worked mainly as an internist (2,4). It was through another successful competition, that he was promoted to professor of *External Pathology* at the Faculty of Medicine in Iasi, where he had previously worked as a prosecutor. He was called by Prof. nRuss senior at his Chair, becoming professor of *Surgical Pathology* (bandages and fracture devices) on December 7, 1885, as well as director of the Laboratory of Surgical Pathology (1897-1909) (5,6). In 1889, he applied to the "St. Spyridon" Hospitals Administration" (Epitropia) for reinstatement, based on his previous competition, as a secondary (i.e., *specialist*) doctor in the Surgery Department. On April 1st of the same year, he became provisional primary (i.e., *chief*) physician in the Department vacated by the death of Professor Russ, so that, on July 20th, 1890, following his successful competition, Dr. Botez was appointed permanent primary physician, by the Royal Decree No.2499/1890. The clinical basis was the Surgical Service of the "St. Spyridon" Hospital (40 beds), later transformed into the 1st Surgical Clinic (7).

In its turn pediatric medicine is associated with Professor Bottez's name. During the 1884-1885 school year, the dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Ioan Ciure, through a Report addressed to the Ministry of Public Instruction,

¹ Spyridon – Spiridon in Romanian

requested the establishment of a chair of *Pediatric Clinic*, for which he recommended Dr. Constantin Bottez, who undertook to give free courses. Although the *Children's Clinic* was established only in 1897, the activity in this specialty benefited from the support of Professor Botez since 1885, having as its clinical basis for childcare the Gregorian Institute, and for older children, the Children's Department of "St. Spyridon" Hospital, respectively. "Caritatea" [Charity] Children's Hospital, coordinated by Professor Russ senior, existed since 1880. At the Faculty, in this field, substitute professors were Dr. Vasile Bejan (1897) and Dr. Victor Imerwol (1898-1900) (8).

Once promoted professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Iași, together with his masters, Professors Ludovic Russ senior and Leon Sculy, Botez completed the founding triumvirate of the Iași surgery school.

After the death of Professor Russ sr. (1816-1888), who had led the surgical department of the "St. Spyridon" Hospital, it was up to Professor Botez to develop the great surgery in the spirit of his age over the next 20 years (1885-1909). As a surgeon, he was judicious in establishing the operative indication – said Professor of Surgery Paul Anghel in his portrait of Professor Botez, with whom he initially also worked, and added: "He preferred to postpone the operative intervention or not do it at all than to risk an operation that seemed to him it would endanger the patient's life". Botez was a follower of conservative surgery, avoiding extensive interventions. However, as Paul Anghel stated, the fact was mainly due to prudence and the desire to avoid serious post-operative infections, which, at that time, had a particularly high frequency and mortality rate, although the operations themselves were correctly performed. And even if, as some contemporaries testified, including Anghel, "his technique often left something to be desired, he was a perfect diagnostician illustrating the school of the great clinicians of the West: Trélat, Gosselin, Desprez"(2).

Crossing the pre-antiseptic era, towards antiseptis and asepsis. Botez was trained at a time when the theory of diatheses, humoral

constitution of the organism and disease-carrying miasmas was still valid in explaining nosocomial infectious pathology (Fig.2). Trélat himself was a follower of it (2). Microbes were hardly suspected or accepted to exist, and combating them was only gradually integrated. On the path forged in the hospitals of Paris in the presence of his masters, Dr. C. Botez used antisepsis cautiously, promoting it in Iași, together with Prof. Leon Sculy, although, in general, he was reluctant to new things, preferring time-tested procedures. On the contrary, Professor Sculy - emphasised in his iatro-historical essays Professor Anghel - was more accessible to progress, so he more quickly applied antisepsis and implemented the new requirements that "imposed the asepsis method, introducing the autoclave, the poupinel and sterilised water into the clinics. These asepsis measures were all relative, because sterile gowns, masks and gloves were not yet known, which later served to give even more safety to the surgical act" - commented the same Paul Anghel, Sculy's disciple (2).



Fig.2. C. Botez

This is how Prof. Anghel described Prof. Botez: "One could see dozens of patients with abdominal tumors waiting their turn for surgery in the rooms of his service; but on the observation sheet at the head of the patients it was written by Botez's hand: "inoperable"; or his favorite phrase: "noli me tangere". The infectious complications of operations, such as seen in the pre-antiseptic era, determined him... to operate in a very special way. He operated with fear, quickly lost his cool, became irritable and violent during operations

with those around him.”. “His antiseptic practice consisted in the use of phenic acid, sublimate and iodoform. The instruments were not boiled, but bathed in a 5% phenic acid solution. The surgical wound was tamped with pieces of cotton soaked in a sublimate solution, squeezed with the hands of the first nurse or guardian (‘carer’) and then arranged in a pyramid on a tray that was presented to the operations. He did not wash his hands with sterilised water, but with green soap and a little weak sublimate, kept in a large glass jar. This jar was placed on a shelf above a wooden-framed basin. He did not clean, nor cut his nails short, nor did he rub his hands with a brush while washing them.

As this method was relatively new for him, there were also mistakes or attitudes devoid of anti-septic logic. So, for example, if somehow during the operation he soiled his hands with blood, he did not hesitate to wipe them on his apron (which was not sterilised) and sometimes he rinsed them a little in a sublimate solution, continuing then the operation. Before sewing up any wound, he was in the habit of sprinkling iodoform powder over its surface, with the help of a paintbrush from a porcelain jar.” “Little by little, however, the methods evolved in surgery; in the place of antiseptics, asepsis had begun to make its way...”

“Toward the end of his career, however, he allowed himself to be influenced by an excellent pupil of the school of Montpellier, Dr. Botezat², who had become his secondary (i.e., specialist) surgeon. Under his urging, he began to change some of his old practices, daring to do larger operations. However, the operation of a simple ovarian cyst was becoming a real event. An unusual movement occurred in the service, special cauldrons or cooking appliances appeared in the entrance hall next to the operating room. In them were boiled in a weak solution of phenic acid: compresses, tampons and instruments, filling the rooms of the entire service with an



Fig.3. Personalities of Iasi at Slănic Resort (1885). Among them, in the center: Grigore Cobălcescu, flanked by Dr. Ioan Ciurea (right); Gheorghe Mârzescu and Dr. Constantin Bottez

abundant and phenolised steam. During the operation many assistants surrounded the patient.

Hands, some with tampons, some with instruments or other objects, hurriedly reached out to the boss at his violent, authoritative and impatient request. His cries could be heard far and wide throughout the service, creating an atmosphere of panic, in which all the staff froze. A ritual was performed by a priest engulfed by the anger of the gods and one could rightly speak of an operative anger.”

“He was very authoritarian and no one would go beyond his word. Very economical, he didn't like changes, because of the expenses they required, and in terms of consumables, he was an economy bordering on stinginess.” Only “shortly before he ended his career, he had accepted a series of innovations ... A complete sterilization installation with autoclave, sink etc. had been introduced. All these improvements were made in his absence (he had gone to seek his health in Slănic³) (Fig.3). As soon as he returned, however, he didn't have time to use them”...(2)

A surgeon and a researcher. To compensate for the lack of medical publications, the initiative went to the elite body of the Iași Medical Faculty. In 1885 Professor Bottez got involved in the editing of the ephemeral “Medical Gazette of Iași”, together with Professor Vasile Bejan and other

² Dr. Paul Bothezat (Pavel Botezat) - coauthored two studies with E.A. Fargue and P.L. Brousse, his teachers at Montpellier.

³ Slănic Moldova – a famous resort, rich in mineral springs, often called in those days the “Károly Város of Romania”.

enthusiasts, among whom the Editorial Committee included Professors Eugen Rizu, Vasile Negel, Gabriel Socor and Emanoil Riegler, too. Through the Editorial Committee, the "Gazette" was actually the organ of the medical school of Iași, with a certain emphasis on obstetrics-gynecology and child care. Here, for example, C. Botez published some "Considerations on two cases of saphenous vein dilatation in Scarpa's triangle, which simulated crural hernia" (9).

Less than two years later, on January 1, 1887, another periodical finally saw the light of day - the *Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, where Professor Botez equally published.

Between 1893-1901, under the direction of Professor Gabriel Socor, the "Annals of the St. Spyridon House of Hospitals and Hospices of Iași" were edited. In addition to Professor Socor, once more, many dedicated doctors supported the new periodical, such as, e.g., Professors V. Bejan, E. Rizu, C. Botez, V. Negel, G. Bogdan.

General surgeon and pioneer of neurosurgery in Iași. Like his predecessors, especially Prof. Leon Scully, Professor Botez practiced neurosurgery and his follower, Pavel Bothezat, did the same. Botez studied temporal artery aneurysms. Deepening this pathology, he distinguished between superficial and deep aneurysms. Their incidence, origin and topography were related to data from Western European literature. As noted by Prof. Dr. Hortensiu Aldea, Constantin Botez discriminated between circumscribed aneurysms and arterio-venous ones; in his works, he mentioned three cirroid and four post-traumatic aneurysms (12). He enumerated criteria for differential diagnosis; the therapeutic approach was guided by the principles of Professor Verneuil (1858), defining direct, indirect methods and the administration of some coagulation agents. He dealt in parallel with congenital erectile tumors, usually appearing in childhood, with circumscribed cutaneous angioma and subcutaneous angioma, outlining that sometimes such formations can be confused with lipoma or fibroma. He described pneumoceles, encephaloceles, as well as

syphilitic gums developing between the periosteum and bone, with possible evolution toward Lancereaux gummy osteitis. According to Botez, exostoses and hyperostoses can often mimic a tumoral appearance as well. In 1889, Professor Botez published in the *Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists in Iași* (III, no. 6:170-178), the paper "Fracture of the skull irradiated to the base", discussing a series of diagnostic and therapeutic aspects. The author presented, from an anatomico-pathological point of view, the first extradural hematoma of the posterior fossa, associated with a left parieto-occipital extradural hematoma. Among his works with the same topic, one can mention: "Congenital hydrocephalus at the root of the nose" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1890, IV, no. 6:179-190), and "Nasal encephalocele" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1891), respectively (11).

A prominent member of the *Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*. The subjects of clinical cases reported in the *Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași* were various. In addition to those on neurosurgical topics, "Two cases of congenital coxo-femoral dislocation. Anorectal formation defect" were presented (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1889, year III, no. 4: 97-114); along with a "Pyloric cancer causing a gastro-cutaneous fistula" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1889, year III, no.5:143-155); from the obstetrical sphere there was a discussion "Regarding caesarean section. Abdominal penetrating wound" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1890, year IV, no. 4: 99-104); and another on a "Pelvic fracture in a pregnant woman in the 9th month. Uterine rupture and crushing of the fetal head" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1891, year V, no.1: 15-82). In 1901 (15th editorial year) he reported on an "Ovarian cyst removed by laparotomy" and "Sarcoma of the left hand pollex", and in 1904 (18th editorial year), "A double vagina case" appeared. In other issues of the *Bulletin* from 1904, he signed two articles together with Dr.

Constantin Mârzescu, about a "Degenerated fibromyoma of the abdominal walls" [Fibromyome dégénéré des parois de l'abdomen] and about a "Large liver abscess" [*Grand abcès du foi*].

Dr. Mârzescu, a promising surgeon trained in "St. Spyridon" Establishments in Iasi, later became a reputed specialist of the "Holy Virgin" [Precista Mare] Hospital in Roman, a small city not far from Iasi. In 1908 (20th editorial year) Botez published in the *Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iasi*: "A case of pulmonary artery insufficiency. Multiple complications in the course of typhoid fever"; "A case of hypertrophic pneumatic osteo-arthro-pathy treated by a pulmonary mixture" [Un cas d'ostéo-arthro-pathie hypertrophique pneumique traité par la mixture pulmonique]; "A case of hysterical mutism"; "A case of obesity"; and "Up to what dose can Somatose⁴ be administered? — A case of Leukocyturia" (12,13).

He took care of laparotomies, herniotomies and the treatment of anthrax with radiant heat, writing works

that echoed in the Iași and national scientific world. Together with Professors G. Bogdan, as the first author, and

V. Negel, as the third, Botez co-authored a forensic report: "Murder or self-defense" [Meurtre ou légitime défense], "Forensic Report" [Rapport médico-légal, Iassy, 1900?] (1). As an expert surgeon, Botez participated in other forensic commissions, too (15).

Infectious-contagious pathology and its consequences were also covered: "A case of mutilating leprosy" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1892, year VI, no.3:79-82); "Étude clinique et thérapeutique sur la Pustule Maligne" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iași*, 1893, VII, no.5: 138-158); "Clinical and therapeutic study on Malignant Pustule" (*Bulletin of the Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iasi*, 1894, VIII, no.1:7-24) (12,13). Prof. Anghel considered the

writings on the malignant pustule to be classics (7). The present listings are of course not exhaustive, but they can suggest the complexity of the topics addressed, theoretically and practically, by the Professor.

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Appointed curator of the Museum of Natural History of the *Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iasi* (1894-1897), he went through a not so pleasant episode, when he lost the key to the cupboard at the Museum, where the collections of coins and medals were kept. He was summoned to be present at the breaking of the lock and the taking of the inventory in the presence of other members of the *Society*, on November 31 and December 1, 1898, concluding a Record of Findings (12). Vice-president (1897-1900) under Prof. Dr. Gabriel Socor's

⁴ Somatose - it was a beef extract, used as a food substitute in certain situations (14).

presidency, Botez was elected President of this venerable Scientific Society between 1900-1903.

In September 1903, when the Congress of the Romanian Association for the Advancement and Dissemination of Sciences (ARIRS), took place in the auditorium of the University of Bucharest, Prof. Botez, chief



Fig.4. C. Botez

surgeon and professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Iasi, and Dr. Benno Th. Stenner were delegates of both the *Society of Physicians and Naturalists* and the "St. Spyridon" Establishments of Iasi.

In 1890, C. Botez participated in the celebration of the 58 years existence of the *Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iasi*, coordinated by the then President of the institution, Dr. Gustav Otremba, in accordance with Art. 45 of the Statutes. Together with other prestigious figures of the *Society of Physicians and Naturalists* and of the city, he honoured the festivities in the evening of October 28, 1890, in the halls of the "Traian" Hotel in Iasi. After the several messages of congratulations, and the president's detailed report on the past activity of that pioneering scientific *Society*, a banquet followed, accompanied by Military Music. At the meeting of the *Society of Physicians and Naturalists of Iasi* held on June 12, 1909, together with Professors G. Bogdan, G. Demetriade A.A. Lambrior and V. Imerwol, C. Botez was proposed in the Commission for organising the 75th anniversary of the *Society*. Scheduled for the fall

of 1909, in cooperation with the meeting of the Doctors' General Association in Iasi, the celebration was eventually canceled (12). Anyway, in July 1909, C. Botez suddenly died (Fig.4).

Manager and "St. Spyridon" Establishments Administration. During that period, the collaboration between the "St. Spyridon" Hospitals Administration [Epitropia] and the Faculty of Medicine was not always one of the best. It is known that Prof. Botez had come into conflict with this Administration in 1897, due to causes concerning the Clinics management. Later, from 1904 to 1907, C. Botez was himself elected one of the three managers of the "St. Spiridon" Establishments in Iasi. On October 24, 1904, when he was one of the administrators of the "St. Spiridon", he participated in the laying of the foundation stone in the construction of the "Spatar⁵ Dumitru Borș" Hospital in Târgu-Frumos (16). Through his involvement as manager, but also as head of the Surgery Clinic, he largely helped the "modernisation of "St. Spiridon" Hospital, according to the requirements of science", emphasised Prof. Gabriel Socor (1). Curiously, in December 1906, the "St. Spiridon" Administration Council, rejected the request of the Faculty of Medicine Council to make available a number of 10 beds for the new Department of Experimental Therapeutics, to which Professor Emanoil Riegler, a trailblazer of Romanian clinical chemistry and pharmacology, had been appointed, even if the "St. Spiridon" Council, whose approval was requested, included personalities such as professors Ludovic Russ jr., Vasile Negel and Constantin Botez, among others (16).

Physician and Teacher. Apparently a serious and difficult person, Constantin Botez was a doctor devoted to his patients, a teacher who appreciated his students and collaborators, a master who conquered by the clarity of his presentations and explanations, as well as with the advice given to young people, whom he encouraged and promoted (Fig.5).

⁵ "spatar" in Romanian - chancellor, a rank among the boyars.

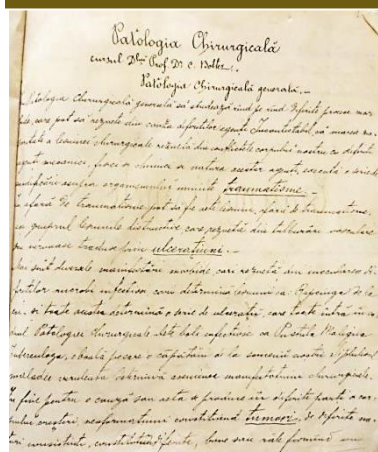


Fig.5. Handwritten notes after Prof. C. Bottez's Surgical Pathology Course (Museum of the History of Medicine, Univ. Med. Pharm. – Iasi)

That's how, as a doctoral student, through Professor Botez's Clinic, the future academician Nicolae Hortolomei passed in his turn. He chose for one of the reports presented on November 22, 1908 at the Society of Medical Students, whose president he was, "A case of intestinal tuberculosis with annular rupture of the small intestine in an encysted peritonitis simulating an abdominal tumor, a case presented in Mr. Botez's clinic" (9).

It is also known that when Dr. Ernest Juvara, coming from Bucharest, applied for the position of Associate Professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Iasi, Constantin Botez was among those who supported his candidacy in the Professional Council, noting Juvara's qualities of surgeon and anatomist, despite his age, some, few indeed, considered too young. In his speech, Professor Botez highlighted contributions to the study of blood effusions, the suture of the abdominal wall through the intricacies of the musculo-aponeurotic planes and the radical cure of complete prolapse of the rectum (9).

Thanks to his professional prestige, on July 13, 1887, Prof. Botez was part of the team of doctors who examined Mihail Eminescu, the great Romanian poet, who had suffered an acute episode of his condition.

Botez dedicated himself to his work, "completely disinterested from a material point of

view and ended up being the most sought-after surgeon not only in Moldova (Moldavia), but also in the neighboring countries inhabited by Romanians", affirmed, his good colleague, Professor Socor (1).

The man of the city. Dr. Botez was a balanced person, his opinion often being decisive not only in the councils of the Faculty of Medicine, but also in those of the University of Iași. Indeed, the Professor was one of the representatives of the Faculty of Medicine in the University Senate several times (17). He was delegated for drawing up the internal administration regulations of the Universities, together with Professor Aron Densușanu. In addition, in the school year 1898-1899 he was delegated, with Professors George Bogdan and Aristide Peride, to contribute to the agreement of the Faculty of Medicine Regulations with the new law of Public Instruction, promulgated on March 28, 1898 (18). At the same time, C. Bottez was part of a committee, equally including Professors G. Bogdan and E. Puscariu, commissioned by the Faculty council to change the regulations for medical studies, in collaboration with another committee from the Bucharest University.

Starting in 1905, a new regulation came into force, which stipulated six years of medical study, four end-of-year exams, seven doctorates and a thesis, a regulation that remained valid for a very long period (18).

In 1901-1902, the Senate of the University of Iași and the teaching college of the Faculty of Medicine appointed a committee, composed of Prof. Leon Sculy, Constantin Botez and Zaharia Samfirescu, to evaluate the works of candidates for the 3rd Department of Surgical Clinic at the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest (19). The Senate united with the Council of the Faculty of Medicine also appointed him, together with L. Sculy and E. Juvara, to a committee meant to evaluate the works of the candidates for the Department of Operative Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine in Iași. The worthy candidates were: Paul Anghel, Ion Bălăcescu and Nicolae Bărdescu (20). As recorded in the Yearbooks of the University of Iași for the academic years 1904-1906 and 1906-1907, his name appeared on the list of masters from which the University had

to choose its rector (19). In the end, the professor of Forensic Medicine, George Bogdan, was appointed to this position.

As a liberal, Botez was re-elected as a senator of Iași in the Romanian Parliament, a capacity in which he served the country, serving Iași, Spiridonia Establishments and, directly, the Faculty of Medicine, threatened in 1884 and 1900 with its abolition due to the lack of budgeting by the Ministry (8).

Those who knew him testify to the existence



Fig.6. C.Botez

of a dominant, yet reflective personality. Professor Botez was "a tall, bulky man, with a severe but beautiful figure, with long white hair and beard. He had the air of a patriarch" (2) (Fig.6).

At his funeral, on July 7, 1909, speeches were delivered by representatives of the Faculty of Medicine, of the *Society of Physicians and Naturalists*, the "St. Spyridon" Hospital in Iași and his colleagues: Professors Gabriel Socor and Mihai Ștefănescu-Galați, both very close to the deceased. If Gabriel Socor, dean of the Faculty, insisted on the contribution and value of Professor Botez as a surgeon, on his role in the consolidation of "St. Spyridon" Administration [Epitropia], the Faculty, the surgical specialty and the improved care of patients, Ștefănescu-Galați particularly evoked his human complexity, highlighting the mourning and emotion of an entire city, confronted to the loss of an "incomparable doctor, ..eminent teacher, ..distinguished citizen and, above all, great soul" (1, 21).

Between the "antiseptic logic" and the "operation rage", his exemplary life for the destiny of surgery in Iași at the dawn of modernity exemplifies, in addition to the permanence of some axiological landmarks, the

very difficult of changes in mentality, the distrustful dynamics of the human mind in the transition from doubt to new convictions and behaviours, consistent with the progress of knowledge and the changes they involve in the spheres of professional and social existence.

Only the reverberation of such messages is necessary for the social reaction to occur.

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